DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 093 151 FL 004 393

TITLE Reading at FLES Level. A Report by the FLES Committee of the American Association of Teachers of French.
INSTITUTION American Association of Teachers of French.
PUB DATE Dec 64
NOTE 56p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$3.15 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Audiolingual Methods; Elementary Education; *Fles; *French; Language Instruction; Programed Instruction; *Reading Development; Reading Material Selection; Reading Skills; *Second Language Learning; Teaching Guides; *Teaching Techniques; Vocabulary Development

ABSTRACT

This report characterizes the reading experience which develops as the outgrowth and normal extension of a sound audiolingual FLES program. General teaching procedures and techniques are described. The reading process exists in three stages: the prereading phase, the initial reading stage, and the real reading stage. The length of the prereading phase, that of audiolingual language instruction, must be determined on the basis of the foreign language experience of the student and his stage of development in acquiring the skills of reading in his own language. This phase is followed by the initial reading experience, which consists of reading the structures already learned in spoken usage. The reading skills acquired in the first stage are extended, polished, and applied in the second, which is the real reading stage. This stage consists of the abstraction of meaning from the printed symbol, and can be implemented by teacher-directed silent reading, which is followed by supplementary reading of texts with controlled content. To further develop reading instruction methodology, the FLES specialist and reading specialist should share a common concern in providing sequential programs, and thus should work together in preparing techniques and materials for programmed instruction. (LG)

READING AT FLES LEVEL

A Report by

THE FLES Committee of

The American Association of Teachers of French

Submitted

December 28, 1964

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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INTRODUCTION

The topic for the annual report of the FLES Committee of the American Association of Teachers of French is selected by the Chairmen of the Committee upon the recommendation of the membership of the AATF, as represented at the FLES Committee section meeting at the national meeting in December. The FLES Committee reports have in years past dealt with general topics which affected total foreign language programs: The Supply, Qualification, and Training of Teachers of FLES (1961), Language Structure at FLES Level Including Testing for Mastery of Structures (1962), and The Correlation of a Long Language Sequence Beginning in The Elementary School (1963).[1] This year the report deals with one specific skill in a total FLES program-- reading.

Robert Lado defines reading as "grasping the language patterns from their written representation quickly without analysis of what symbols represent what sounds."[2] George Scherer states that the first indispensable prerequisite for real reading power in the second language is the mastery of the sound system of that language.[3] Both of these statements carry the implication that the spoken language is already mastered, within at least a limited range, before reading is begun. The importance of the pre-reading phase has been stressed in other reports of the National FLES Committee of the American Association of Teachers of French and will not be dealt with in detail here. To this basic assumption, that students

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1. Information about these reports may be obtained from The National Information Bureau, 972 Fifth Avenue, New York

2. Robert Lado. Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1964

3. George A.C. Scherer, "A System for Teaching Modern Foreign Language Reading." In Teacher's Notebook in Modern Foreign Languages, Spring 1964. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

who are being taught reading in a foreign language have acquired the basic skills of auditory comprehension and active oral use of the language, can be added another: that these students are already literate in their native language. This report therefore, discusses the character of the reading experience which should develop as the outgrowth and normal extension of a sound audio-lingual FLES program.

The fact that there are wide differences of opinion in regard to the acquisition of the reading skills in our native language should forewarn those interested in a definitive statement on reading at FLES level that there might be some disparity in viewpoint on the teaching of reading in a second language. The following report is a synthesis of the contribution of the FLES committee members and represents, on the whole, the viewpoint of the majority. In those areas in which a member had a specific difference of opinion, reference has been made to it and the dissenting opinion noted.

Since it is not the province of the National FLES Committee of the AATF to make pronouncements, this report should be considered as a statement of current trends and practices in the teaching of reading a foreign language at the elementary level. The ideas and recommendations in this report are culled from the experiences of the members of the Committee as teachers and supervisors of FLES programs. It should be noted that these practitioners of FLES have investigated and employed the findings of research in linguistics, growth and development, and the psychology of learning as they apply to their field of endeavor. It is this type of professional awareness among foreign language teachers which will contribute significantly to the establishment of sound FLES programs as an integral part of the total foreign language curriculum.

THE TRANSITION TO READING -- THE ACQUISITION OF THE SKILLS

I. THE PRE-READING PHASE

The need to communicate directly with other people grows increasingly more apparent with each succeeding generation. Children who feel a sense of security in the comprehension of a foreign language when it is spoken to them and derive delight in being understood when speaking that language to others are ready to embark upon the next two steps to becoming truly proficient-- reading and writing.

Exposure to the Foreign Language

The period third grade through the sixth grade, according to recent publications seems to be characteristic as the national trend for concentration on the audio-lingual phase of instruction. Currently most FLES programs delay the introduction of reading and writing until well after audio-lingual learning has begun. There is considerable evidence to show that most pupils will better learn proper pronunciation and intonation if they concentrate first on listening and imitating rather than reading. The children will be more likely to give English values to the letters, words, and sentences if they see them in print before they have established adequate pronunciation and intonation habits. The psychology of learning and the science of linguistics have much to offer FLES teachers of French. The sound features and structural patterns can be assimilated so much more readily now that pattern practices and systematic drills are undertaken. Transformation -- enlargement of simple units into larger units can be taught painlessly-indeed, in the spirit of pleasurable gain, through variations in techniques and activities.

The child must develop a reading readiness in the foreign language just as he did in his own. Readiness to learn to read includes, beyond a desire to read, an oral facility in the use of that dialogue material

which has been introduced in the audio-lingual years of instruction. The child should be able to use this material in simple conversation without hesitation. Furthermore, his pronunciation of this material should be native or near native.

The Time Element

It is generally conceded that two or three years of oral practice of fifteen to twenty minutes daily in the third, fourth, and fifth grades, to one half hour daily in the sixth grade will prepare pupils with oral proficiency sufficiently solid to enable them to begin work on reading matter based on precisely that which they have learned to understand and to speak. In any case this should not be earlier than the fifth grade, at which time the student will have mastered the reading skills in his own language. *See dissenting opinion below. When foreign language instruction begins as late as the sixth grade, the length of the pre-reading phase can no longer be determined exclusively by time spent studying the foreign language but must involve a consideration of the general capabilities of the students and their already ingrained dependence on the printed word for learning, as well as their progress in the audio-oral skills in the target language.

These conclusions as to the length of the pre-reading phase of FL instruction may be considered in a new light under very ideal conditions. At the Middlebury Language School young children of varying ages, selected at random from the town, were able at the end of six weeks to dramatize stories in a foreign language, read the same material, and some few were able to write basic ideas on the blackboard. Of course, the entire

*Dissenting Opinion: In most classes there is probably no reason why the introduction of printed symbols should be prolonged beyond one year after the beginning of language study when FLES programs begin as late as the third or foutth grade. As a matter of fact, the children are usually eager to learn to read and often must be held back against their will until a solid audio-lingual base is established.

program was highly concentrated and accelerated.

Perhaps in the near future kindergarten FLES programs will be commonly accepted. This early beginning will conform to the thinking advanced by neurologists such as Wilder Penfield.[1] *Dr. Penfield maintains that the study of a second language at this early period will coincide with "mother-talk", whereby children absorb language structure in the manner of their mother tongue without harm to general learning and without impairment to their physical well-being. When this potential is recognized and capitalized upon in the educative process, the comprehension and production of a second language orally will, by necessity, change the length and character of the pre-reading phase of foreign language instruction in the elementary school.*

To set a specific time schedule for the pre-reading period would be to attempt to predict techniques of handling all of the variables in a FLES program. Some of these considerations are: a) type of class - selective, heterogeneous, elective?, b) program per se -- loosely organized, incorporated in well established plan for continuity, c) general curricula -- FLES as isolated subject, integrated into other subject matter areas, d) resources -- availability and articulation of materials, accessibility of equipment, e) time involved -- number of minutes per week, number of years of exposure, f) teacher -- specialist, quality of training, classroom teacher, g) age of students.

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1. *According to Dr. Penfield, in the very young child the "uncommitted cortex" is extremely receptive. The very young have a "remarkable switch mechanism that enables them to turn from one language to another without confusion, without translation, without a mother-tongue accent." But after age ten or twelve, according to verifications made by the use of electrodes in analyzing currents in the study of the functioning of the brain , the speech centers once so impressionable -- "termed uncommitted cortex" - cannot be transferred on the cortex to areas then occupied with perception. "The brain of the twelve year old is prepared for rapid expansion of the vocabulary of the mother tongue and of the other languages he may have heard in the formative period."*

Wilder Penfield, M.D., "The Uncommitted Cortex-The Child's Changing Brain", The Atlantic Monthly (July, 1964).

French in the early elementary grades, producing superior competence in oral production, should insure favorable results in the reading and writing phases of learning the language. However, choosing a pre-reading phase which is too short can jeopardize the audio-oral skills already gained, just as postponeing reading for an inordinate length of time can result in loss of student interest. The determination of the point at which reading should be introduced is a vital ingredient in the success of the total FLES program. One can say unequivocally that the urgency of making FLES meaningful is being proclaimed more and more with the passing of time and in the light of fast-moving world events.

II. ASSOCIATION OF SOUNDS AND SYMBOLS

The average FLES pupil comes to the reading stage in his development of skills in the foreign language with extensive prior knowledge of the reading process in the mother tongue. His experience encompasses all of the main componerts in the interpretation of the printed word: word perception, comprehension of ideas represented by words, reaction to these ideas, and assimilation or integration of ideas with previous knowledge or experience. The degree of facility developed in the native language in comprehension of ideas represented by words, in reaction to ideas, and in assimilation or integration of ideas with previous knowledge or experience may be considered as theoretically totally transferable to the reading process in the foreign language. In other words, the skills the youngster has learned in these three parts of reading in the native language will be equally applicable to reading in the foreign language; use of these skills will be a help to the pupil reading in the foreign language. The fourth component of the reading process (word perception) constitutes an area of interference from the mother tongue. The skills the youngster has learned in this part of reading in the native language will not be equally applicable to reading in the foreign language; use of word-perception skills of the native language will be a hindrance to the pupil reading in the foreign language.

There are four major aids to word perception; memory of word form or configuration, context clues, word analysis (structural and phonetic), and the dictionary. Two of these (context clues and the dictionary) may be classed as theoretically totally transferable aids. The other two aids (word configuration and word analysis) breed interference from the native language in the process of word perception in the foreign language.

If a coordinate system in which the processes of the foreign language achieve equal status with and operate separately from those of the native language is to be maintained in the reading stage, positive habits in the foreign language that parallel the habits in the native language of memory of word configuration and of word analysis must be developed. Otherwise, the learner will utilize those skills from the native language he already possesses when faced with the necessity of attacking words in the foreign language. This utilization may result in regression to a compound system of language; that is, behavior in the foreign language may be dominated by and dependent upon the language processes of the mother tongue. What has been termed "spelling pronunciation" may plague the pupil previously at ease in the audiolingual band of the foreign language.

Activities that bring the auditory perception and discrimination of the phonemes of the foreign language to the level of conscious awareness prior to presentation and drill of the visually perceived elements will facilitate the association of sounds and symbols and will help thwart interfering habits. Before the pupil can associate vowel and consonant sounds with letters of the alphabet; before he can use visual clues in the printed word in determining the vowel sounds and the consonant sounds, and later syllabic divisions and the accent; before he can blend all of those elements into meaningful words, the pupil must be able to identify and distinguish aurally the consonant sounds, vowels sounds, syllables, and accent that form the words of the foreign language. If the alphabet of the foreign language is the same or nearly the same as the alphabet of the mother tongue, the pupil's fixed habits of response to the symbols as they appear singly and in clusters in the words of his native language must be broken. The learner must become aware that he associates the same symbols or nearly the same symbols with the sounds

of the new language, but that these associations are all new and different.

Activities designed to bring the phonemes of the language into sharp auditory focus anticipate the sequential introduction of visually perceived elements: consonants, vowels, syllables, and accent.

Many facts seem to favor the teaching of consonants first.

(1) There is a more regular correspondence between consonant sounds and letters than between vowel sounds and letters, although there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the consonant sounds and the letters that represent them.

(2) There is a more regular correspondence between the consonant sounds and letters of English and French than there is between the vowel sounds and letters of English and French.

(3) The irregularities of fit (letter-sound correspondence) are less complex for the consonants than for the vowels. The following three types of irregularity of fit may be taught more easily through consonants.

a. one sound represented by different letters of letter combinations (fable, phoque)

b. one letter representing more than one sound (comme ci)

c. silent letters (homme, soldat)

(4) Consonants form the distinguishing framework on which global recognition of word configuration may hang.

(5) Knowledge of the sounds that even a few consonant letters commonly represent can be used almost immediately be a beginning reader to build vocabulary items through consonant substitution. (le, me, te, je, se, ce)

(6) Consonants can provide visual clues when learning the vowel sounds, since it is often the vowel-consonant pattern that furnishes the clue to the vowel sound. (ce - cet, me - mer)

Readiness activities that give training in auditory perception and discrimination of consonants may concentrate in order on the initial, final, and medial consonantal element of speech .

An effective program in sound-symbol association should develop sequentially the skills and understandings that unlock the printed words of the new language. These skills and understandings are learned through words that are in the oral vocabulary of the pupil. Obviously, the program should proceed from the simple to the complex. Theoretically, the program of word analysis should keep pace with the kinds of words the child meets in his reading. The skills and understandings first taught should be applicable to authentic language and should be basic to those that follow. An efficient program in sound-symbol association is based on scientific knowledge of the native language and of the foreign language. The FLES teacher needs to recognize the elements of language that follow regular patterns, the problems due to interference from the mother tongue, the problems caused by multiple patterns of fit, the exceptions and unique cases. A good program of instruction should encourage the child to make correct generalizations from the examples he is studying and should provide adequate practice of the application of these generalizations to other words.

Methods and techniques for presenting the phonetic elements of the foreign language to middle-grade learners may be adapted from studies conducted to develop or to determine successful devices for teaching children to read in their native language. Since phonemes are integral parts of language patterns, the pupil should not hear them nor be asked to produce them in isolation. In any technique involving auditory perception, the teacher should avoid distortion of the language from "over-pronunciation".

The following types of procedures may be used in developing audi-

tory perception of a give phoneme:

(1) Pronounce a pair of words. (rouge - rond, balle - belle, bleu - blanc, ballon - marron, loup - tout, moi - toi, etc) Ask the pupil to tell:

a. whether or not the words sound alike at the beginning (initial consonant), at the end (final consonant), in the middle (medial consonant).

b. whether or not the words rhyme (vowels and semi-vowels).

c. whether or not the words have the same number of parts (syllables) or how many syllables there are.

d. where the accent falls.

(2) Give the pupil an assortment of pictures. (un meunier, un mouchoir, un merle, un enfant, etc.) Say one word. (maman) Ask the pupil to select the picture or pictures whose names:

a. begin with the same sound as "maman".

b. rhyme with "maman".

c. have the same number of parts as "maman", etc.

(3) Pronounce three words, two of which contain the same phoneme. (soulier, coucher, malade) Ask the pupil to select the two that contain the phoneme in question.

(4) Give two or three words that contain the same phoneme (livre, petit, ici) Ask the pupil to add to the list. (...merci, Pitou, bicyclette, etc.)

(5) Substitute words containing a given phoneme in a pattern sentence. (Je mets du savon dans mon sac.)

(..... de la soupe)

(..... des soldats)

The following types of procedures may be used in developing visual perception of a given phoneme:

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(1) Show (write) and say three or four words. (loup - tout - cou) Let the pupil discover that the words which contain the same sound:

a. contain the same letter or letters.

b. contain different letters for the same sound.

c. contain silent letters, etc.

(2) Ask the pupil to suggest other words that contain the phoneme in question. Pictures may prompt certain vocabulary items. Verbally incompleted sentences may be used to prompt a word. Add the suggested words to the list.

(3) Give the youngster a column of words headed by a "clue" word for a given phoneme. Ask the pupil to underline the words in the list that contain the same phoneme. (mère...frere, pere, faire, mer, dessert, coucher, etc.)

(4) Number the words of the above lists. Ask the pupil:

a. to identify by number a word you pronounce.

b. to read aloud the word beside a given number.

c. to find the picture from his assortment of pictures that matches the word to which you are pointing, etc.

(5) Substitute words in the oral vocabulary but not in the sight vocabulary that contain the phoneme under study in a pattern sentence. Ask the student to read the sentence, determining the pronunciation of the new word on the basis of his experience in word analysis.

Habits of memory of word con iguration and of word analysis form a double-railed track for the reading skill in the foreign language. The systematic association of sounds and symbols as part of word analysis runs along one rail; the amassing of a sight vocabulary runs along the other.[1] Both rails must be introduced and maintained in a planned, sequential pattern if the mechanics of learning to read

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1. Robert Lado, Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach, McGraw-Hill, Inc., (New York, 1964), p. 137.

in the foreign language are to become automatic and the learner is to become proficient in the interpretation of printed matter. In the introductory stage of reading, as soon as sufficient words to permit a given generalization have been introduced (perhaps three or four), sight words may serve as examples for inducing phonetic concepts; but even after the pupil has learned to attach sound and meaning to printed words through phonetic analysis, the teacher should continue to present as sight vocabulary those words that are beyond the present level of ability of phonetic analysis of the pupil, those that do not lend themselves to word analysis (oignon, monsieur, for example), and words not in the active spoken vocabulary of the child.

The entire alphabet of the foreign language may be taught in a pre-reading stage, or the graphemes, especially symbols that differ from those of the native language, may be taught gradually throughout the introductory stage of reading as their identification becomes necessary. Recognition of a symbol in both manuscript and cursive writing may be taught separately or concurrently.

In the case of American children being taught to read in French, an obvious advantage exists in the fact that (with few exceptions, such as cedilla and accent marks) the writing system is the same. This advantage does not, however eliminate the necessity for pointing out to children the way in which the graphic symbols represent the sounds of the language (what Lado calls "the fit"). The broad areas of similarity of representation between the two languages may be dealt with cursorily, but the differences must be presented and drilled systematically. Though the teacher may need to revert to this type of instruction at any point during the reading years of the FLES program, during this period their work should be concerned with only that material which has already been overlearned in the pre-reading phase. Such instruction need not be

purely mechanical but can instead lend color and motivation to the FLES lesson. Games, verses, songs, and comptines can be utilized to great advantage. The following example is adapted from a game suggested in Totor et Tristan (Ginn and Co.)

One student whispers to the teacher the word selected. A large square is drawn on the chalkboard, and the student says: "Je vais au marche et j'achete quelque chose. Le mot commence par le son ch." At the same time, the child prints the letters ch in the square. The other children begin to guess the word by saying: "Est-ce une chaise?" The teacher writes the word guessed in a list on the chalkboard. By the time the correct word has been discovered, there has usually been accumulated a sizeable list of well-known words which begin with the same sound. The teacher then asks the class as a whole to repeat the list; as they do so, the letters which form the sound in question are underlined. It should be noted that the correlation between sound and spelling are being stressed, and not spelling alone. Therefore, one would not indicate merely the beginning letter when that letter does not truly represent the beginning sound. Similarly, when the word begins with a silent letter, as does hibou, the teacher would aid the child at the chalkboard to print hi in the square, striking out the h and showing the representation.

III. ACQUISITION OF A SIGHT VOCABULARY

In the first phase of reading, a dual approach is used. It is important that the "fit" of the language be made clear to the point of complete mastery, so that the child may ultimately learn to relate what he sees on the printed page to familiar auditory signals without having to give thought to individual problems of sound symbolization. This clarification takes place over a period of time and in an organized fashion. Simultaneously, however, and before all the problems of "fit"

can be mastered, the child is reading whole sentences, patterns, and expressions in the same form in which they were already overlearned orally This kind of reading need not wait upon a total understanding of all points of correlation between sound and written symbol. Elements occurring which have not yet appeared in the orderly presentation of sound-symbol correlation can be taught briefly without analysis or drill, as recall of the auditory impression is immediate and vivid.

Much of what is known about FLES teaching has been determined from what we know of the learning process through which the child goes in English. It is just as important, however, that the teacher recognize the differences which exist between the learning of English and that of a second language. Due to the fact that the child is not in an enviromental vacuum where the language is spoken, pedogic techniques and materials must make up for the difference. When the FLES student begins to read he has a very limited speaking vocabulary and the conditions under which he learns to read must be adjusted to this.

Control of the material by the instructor is of prime importance when introducing reading to the FLES student. He must be given only material which he has initially learned (and learned well) orally. The task will be to help the student make an association between the familiar sounds and the unfamiliar words. If the initial stages of oral presentation have been soundly mastered, the student should recognize the relationship between what he sees and what he has already learned.

A very simple and effective technique for the accumulation of a sight vocabulary in the transition to reading is the presentation of a printed form of a dialogue as mastered in the pre-reading phase of

*instruction. *See dissenting opinion. The familiar material in written form should be given to the students by the teacher. The teacher should then read the material aloud to the students with instructions that they should follow the reading with their eyes. Next the material should be read by both the instructor and the entire class in chorus. The major danger that exists is that the student is not making the connection between sound and word, but is merely reciting the material from memory as he did during the oral stages of the presentation. The teacher should now embark on exercises to make certain that the student is reading and not reciting.*

In order to focus attention on specifics the teacher may find it desirable to read an utterance from the chalkboard and then to have the students read in chorus. She should have them read individual words and phrases out of order to insure that pupils pay careful attention to the configuration of each word. After mass mimicry practice, individuals may be called upon to read the phrases and individual words from the utterance. It is highly important that the teacher again verify that the student is actually reading rather than simply recalling the utterance from memory. As more expressions from a dialogue are introduced the

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Dissenting Opinion. In learning to read previously memorized material, such as a dialogue, the child is confronted with the total complex sound system at one time. Faced with the impossible task of making these multiple associations, some children tend to rely altogether on memory (like the baby who "reads" his nursery rhymes with the book held upside down) or on a combination of memory and minimal consonant clues, forming little or no association between major clues and sound. When confronted with a recombination narrative, the child who lacks the associations necessary for real reading will fall back on the associations peculiar to his own language with resultant deterioration of his newly formed French speech habits. This the sword of Damocles that hangs over the head of every foreign language student from the moment he sees the first written word in the foreign language-- the danger against which every foreign language teacher must struggle.

teacher should present them on the chalkboard or pocket chart in random order to verify learning. A picture depicting the re-use of the utterance may help to reinforce meaning for the children. At this point the student should have recognized the relationship which exists between the sounds which he understands and the reading which he is seeing.

When the teacher is assured that the content of a dialogue is in the sight vocabulary of the students, she may provide for them an unfamiliar re-combination in printed form in which the setting and context vary from the original. This is a valuable aid in checking comprehension and in maintaining the interest of the students.

In developing his reading skills the student progresses directly from recognition of sound and word association to selective practices. The student can be introduced to this phase of learning through a narrative. Care must still be taken that the major part of the material is recognizable. Since the familiar words and expressions are now rearranged for the student, it will be necessary that any previously unread material will be introduced on a limited scale. This new material must be carefully scrutinized by the instructor. It should be of a nature that the student can get the meaning by "intelligent guessing" and the sound combinations should not be unfamiliar.

It should be reiterated that the student in this beginning stage should never be asked to read aloud material unless it has been modeled orally by the teacher. English intonation patterns are often exphasized in oral reading particularly by capable students who "read with expression." This exaggerated intonation in their own language exists to a greater extent for middle grade children, in reading than in speaking. These patterns must not be transferred to the second language by unguided oral reading.

When a student begins to use variations of the familiar dialogue to improve his reading skills it is possible to use some of the same variations which were used to improve his facility with the oral material. Students can take turns reading the questions and answers. They might also read questions based upon the narrative which they have already read. The student can often read from the narrative itself sections which will answer the proposed question. This type of exercise insures the teacher the student is reading with meaning, whereas if he is merely reading from the dialogue at random, there is no guarantee that he comprehends what he is reading. Finally, the student can be asked to give an oral report on the material he has read. This is initiated by a question, but it requires the "reporter" to recombine the material which he has read into a meaningful oral narrative of his own. He would still be using words and expressions which he has read, but he would now have to make changes which indicate that he not only understands the material, but that he can use it in a meaningful way. Vocabulary and structures should not go beyond that material already a part of the foreign language basal reading program but only reinforce it by using the language to express new ideas. A few new vocabulary words may be introduced in this material to give pupils practice in inferring meaning from context clues.

It should be kept in mind that this amassing of a sight vocabulary via previously memorized material is only one facet of a total reading program. The analysis of the phonetic elements which are contained in this sight vocabulary proceeds at the same time. Writing, as copying, reinforces the association of the printed symbol and the spoken word.

IV. THE RELATIONSHOP OF WRITING TO THE BEGINNING READING SKILLS

Though many FLES programs are currently introducing reading at least one year in advance of writing,[1] presumably on the theory that reading, as a passive skill, is easier than writing and should therefore precede writing, the validity of this theory now seems open to question. Just as there is an affinity between speaking and hearing, "there is an equally natural affinity between reading and writing, partners in the graphic-material band."[2] When the basic problems involved in both beginning reading and writing skills are analyzed, we find that both skills have one difficulty in common--the association of a new set of sounds with graphic symbols which have a different set of sound associations in the child's own language. Recognition of the fact that this problem of association is encountered in both skills suggests that the simultaneous introduction of reading and writing might prove to be the more effective method of attack, with each skill reinforcing the other.

Copying

Writing, or better yet, copying, should begin almost simultaneously with the introduction of reading. The child should be expected to write only what he can read. Copying dialogue utterances reinforces reading by forcing the pupil to observe each word carefully in order to

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1. Thirty percent of schools responding to the questionnaire sent out by the 1963 National FLES Committee of AATS reported that reading was begun at least one year in advance of writing.

2. Nelson Brooks, Language and Language Learning, New York, 1960. Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., p. 140.

reproduce it. The student should first copy accurately materials learned during the pre-reading phase; dialogues, songs, poems, and short narratives. He must be taught to write all of the accent and punctuation marks correctly and to compare his copy with the model. Practice should go from easy to difficult and the student must concentrate on only one difficulty at a time. Accuracy must always be stressed so that the learner can fix only correct written patterns from this experience.

In writing, for practical purposes, the student should see the need for practice when he encounters difficulties. An essential feature of efficient practice is to repeat a given element of performance often enough to take advantage of the cumulative effect of the repetitions. If possible, the effect of one performance must not be forgotten before the next repetition occurs.

The greatest gain from the time spent in practice will be obtained when:

(1) the practice is systematic: short daily exercises are preferable to infrequent long exercises.

(2) the writing exercises are meaningful: when an accent, letter, or word is singled out for practice, the student must realize that it is a part of a complete piece of written language which conveys a message.

Before extensive copying is attempted the student should have been made aware of all of the names of the letters of the alphabet in the foreign language and should be able to spell orally all of the elements which he is expected to copy. To neglect to do this is to guarantee that the student will be copying French words via the English alphabet. This will promote a great gap in that wall between English and French words,

sounds and symbols which the FLES teacher has taken great care to erect.

The following are useful in promoting writing proctice and involve the use of a sectioned notebook, the chalkboard, and dittoed copies of known materials.

(1) Pre-reading exercises-- Students might copy the date, learn to spell their French name, the name of their teacher, the names of their classmates.

(2) Dialogues-- After the oral presentation of a review dialogue and the initial reading experiences with it, the student should copy the dialogue very carefully, line by line. The teacher should model the sentence and then the students repeat after her. They should then be directed to copy the phrase, repeating it to themselves as they do so. Accuracy is vital!

(3) Pictures-- The teacher may ask questions about a picture which will require answers using structures and vocabulary which are familiar. He should then ask the class to describe the picture, and as they do so, the teacher writes their sentences on the chalkboard. After the sentences have been rearranged to improve their oder and style, the students can copy them.

(4) Routine exercises-- A portion of the notebook may be devoted to keeping records of birthdays, special days, holidays, the weather, etc.

(5) Picture Dictionary-- During the pre-reading phase of instruction a section of the notebook would have been devoted to picture illustrating action words and nouns. During the reading phase these same pictures may be labelled and can now become a simple reference tool.

(6) Varied Exercises-- These may be spot dictations, completion

exercises, choosing correct answers, etc. Exercises involving simple grammatical variations should be directed toward only one element in which special practice is desirable. All of these activities should reinforce the oral skills by clarifying what the students have already learned in the pre-reading years.

(7) Dictation Exercises-- The student should be directed to copy and then to study several words or phrases. A simple dictation of the sentences exactly as learned may follow. In the early weeks of reading instruction the student may be directed to copy from a list before him the word of sentence which the teacher dictates.

(8) Phonetic Exercises-- These are directed toward increasing the student's awareness of a particular phonetic element. He might be directed to find all of the words in a dialogue (with which he had had considerable reading practice) which contained the same vowel sound as the word "moi".

There are of course, many other simple writing activities such as unscrambling sentences, working crossword puzzles, making labels for maps, charts, objects in the classroom, showcases and bulletin board displays.

Writing, as copying, is a good exercise since it forces concentration on exact reproduction and brings into play kinesthetic memory. Certain cautions should be observed, however, even in copying children will make mistakes. Therefore, at the beginning level, copying should probably not be assigned as homework since immediate correction is impossible. Copying , as an exercise in writing, is further limited by the fact that it tends to become boring sooner than most other activities, and when boredom sets in, learning ends. It is the responsibility of the FLES teacher to obviate tedium by alternating her techniques of presentation of

a reading lesson from day to day and by providing a wide variety in the writing lessons which she presents to her students. Though boredom is a danger, it is not an inevitability.

Spelling

The ear has been trained to hear correctly in order to speak correctly. At this stage the student must hear correctly in order to write (spell) correctly. This is fundamental to proper reading habits and to correct spelling. The phonetic elements of the foreign language which are being introduced to develop and enlarge the reading skills should be utilized in the formation of correct spelling habits. The student's ability to spell will depend upon his recognition of the differences in the FL and in English of the letters which make up the sound patterns of the FL. Accurate oral modeling by the teacher aids the student not only in understanding the thought, but in hearing the correct sound. Oral reading and writing will reinforce each other when the teacher uses exercises to review and drill sound habits of pronunciation. Since the reading vocabulary is taken from the speaking vocabualry, the writing exercises should be taken from the reading exercises. Thus all four skills-- listening, speaking, reading, and writing will reinforce each other.

In the early stage of foreign language learning, a student can understand a much larger number of words than he can say. The number of words he can speak will be larger than the number which he can read. The number of words which he can read will be greater than the number of words which he can spell or write. Just how much of his sight vocabulary the student should be required to be able to spell is open to question. It seems logical and realistic to allow a lag between the acquisition of a reading and a spelling vocabulary, as is natural in one's native language.

Directed Writing

When the student reachers the stage of writing free expressions, he must be guided to write what he is able to say and read orally. The teacher must select the words for practice in an order in which the difficulties advance gradually and are introduced one at a time. The teacher must choose the words and sentences from the wide selection which the student has learned audio-lingually. These words and phrases selected may then be woven into a series of short sentences which make up a paragraph. The student himself may be guided to write complete sentences and then paragraphs, using only materials which are familiar to him. Descriptions may have their source in the lives of the children. "My House" or "Our Dog" are possible topics. In any case, practice should always be on meaningful phrases. Improvisation should be discouraged until basic patterns are firmly established, and generally speaking, that does not occur in this initial reading experience.

An introduction of a controlled amount of reading and writing has provided an aid to learning at a time when interest was high and the students were alert and willing to learn. There will always be students who will not profit by the experience, but when it is well done, the maintenance of interest and the development of the talents of capable students more than compensate for the few who fall by the wayside. Reading and writing should be used in a very limited way as a screening process, since the primary objective of a foreign language program in the elementary school is to acquire the skills needed to speak the language with ease and accuracy. Reading and writing should consume a small percentage of time in a total FLES program.

Sample Reading and Writing Lesson

When reading and writing are introduced simultaneously, the number of new associations to be made can be carefully controlled by selecting words

and sentences which contain only a limited number of graphic symbols chosen by the teacher. These sentences can then serve as a combination reading-writing lesson, with kinesthetic memory reinforcing visual and auditory memory. The following lesson. based on materials developed by the Modern Language Association for grades three and four, will serve as an example of such a combination lesson.[3]

Sounds to be taught

oi - voilà	a - madame	ou - trouve our - tourne our - tourne	ch - chou

Generalization to be made

If you hear a consonant at the end of a word, the word often ends in a silent "e".

Words that cannot be spelled by sound	Punctuation marks	
où est	où est	à droite
le livre	voilà	à cache-cache
voici	à midi	lave-toi
valise	à sa place	
	à la balle	

Sentences for dictation

1. Il est midi.
2. Lave-toi, Louise.
3. Il joue à cache-cache.
4. Où est la malade?
5. Voilà la malade.
6. Ouvre la bouche.
7. Le livre est noir.
8. Il ouvre la valise.
9. La soupe est froide.
10. Ouvre le tiroir.
11. Retourne a ta place.
12. Couche-toi, Marie.
13. Louise lave la salade.
14. Où est la banane?
15. Voilà la banane.
16. Où est ma balle?
17. Voila ta balle.
18. Il trouve sa balle.
19. Il ouvre le livre.
20. Il ouvre le tiroir noir.
21. Il va a sa place.
22. Ou est la poule?
23. Ou est le chou?
24. Voici le chou.
25. Le mouchoir est sale.
26. Cache-toi, Louise!
27. Le tiroir est vide.
28. Voila la table.
29. Il va a midi.
30. Il tourne à droite?

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3. The principles on which this lesson is based were developed at the Centre de Recherche et d'Etude pour la Diffusion du Français of the Ecole Normale Superieure de Saint-Cloud. A more complete commentary can be found in the Introduction to Voix et Images, Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co.

This lesson was planned with only one objective in mind-- to teach the association of the graphic symbols with the four sounds selected. These particular sounds were chosen for a beginning lesson, because in French they consistently fit their graphic representation. Furthermore all these sounds will require intensive practice since three of them (/wa/, /u/, and /i/) are subject to strong interference from the English writing system, and the other two (/ɔ̃/ and /a/) to partial interference.

In view of the objective stated above, certain basic principles were adhered to. All vocabulary and structures had already been mastered orally, and grammatical difficulties were cut to a minimum to allow for concentration on sound association. Only one kind of accent mark was introduced. If the teacher so desires, the accent mark may be postponed until the second lesson by selecting for initial presentation four or five sentences which contain no accent. Liaison of the word est was postponed until a subsequent lesson when it can be introduced with the expressions "c'est un ___" and "c'est une ___." Difficulties of verb agreement were postponed by introducing only one form of the verb, which cab be used in subsequent lessons with je, elle, il, or as a familiar imperative. As soon as the sound /ɔ̃/ is introduced, the first person plural of all verbs can be used, and the verb ending -ez can also be taught on the basis of sound.

In the sample lesson only one nonphonemic feature was introduced --the silent e at the end of a word, a feature which is also common to English. This was done purposely to ease the transition to the final silent consonant in French. If the feminine form of the adjective is taught first, the final silent consonant of the masculine form is not a difficult problem. Thus a future lesson involving agreement of the singular adjective can be taught on the basis of sound rather than by grammatical rule. Exceptions can then be intoduced very gradually.

The following general procedure is suggested. The letters representing the sounds to be studied are written on the board along with a key word containing the sound. The few nonphonemic words included in each lesson and words containing new accents will be listed in a separate column. The pupils are then given oral practice on the sounds and key words. They may be asked to name other words which contain these sounds. When the sounds have been mastered orally, the teacher erases the key words, but leaves the nonphonemic words and words containing accents on the board. The teacher then dictates a sentence while one pupil writes it on the board and the other students write on scratch paper. Each sentence is corrected immediately and the pupils then copy the correct sentence in their notebooks. The next step is to have the sentence read aloud several times in chorus with the teacher serving as a model, and then to have it read aloud by individual students. When this procedure is followed, transition is made from the sound to the written symbol and back again to the sound, a process involving both auditory, kinesthetic, and visual memory.

Five or six sentences will probably provide enough practice for one lesson. Thirty sentences were given in order to provide intensive practice on the same sounds over a number of lessons.

As soon as the principal sound-letter correspondences have been firmly established, the reading of memorized dialogues and recombination narratives may proceed at a rapid pace, but writing will progress more slowly because of the poor fit of the French writing system. For example, the child who has established a connection between the sound /o/ and the spellings au, eau, -o, and -ot, may read without difficulty the words chapeau, aussi, numère, and mot, but if he is asked to spell a word containing the sound /o/, he is faced with at least four possibili-

ties, only one of which is correct. In addition the pupil must learn to cope with those rules of written grammar in which the ear cannot serve as a guide. Hence a natural lag is bound to develop between the skills of reading and writing.

The interplay of sound and written symbol is a complex process of transition, which the educated native speaker accomplishes without conscious effort only as a result of long and intensive training. Provided the length of the FLES class period and the length of the sequence permit the introduction of reading and writing without jeopardizing the main objective of skill in oral communication, the transition to high school French will undoubtedly be smoother if reading and writing skills are developed cautiously and gradually in the upper grades of the elementary level.

GUIDED READING

MAINTENANCE AND APPLICATION OF THE SKILLS

Most teachers find that the transition to reading provides a welcome addition to classroom procedure, as well as good reinforcement of purely audio-lingual learning. The introduction to reading may also be a means of arousing new interest in the students for whom learning in school is usually associated with reading and the use of books. Once that the transition has been made, it is natural for both teacher and student to want continued and increased contact with the written form of the language. But-- a word of caution is needed here. The time in class devoted to reading should be limited, even during the second reading stage. The main objective throughout the FLES program is the development of audio-lingual skills. That means a good part of every class period spent in the oral use of the language without reference to the printed page.

During the second reading stage it is advisable to continue the development of this skill in a highly controlled classroom situation. The students need reinforcement and further development of the new set of reading habits started during the initial presentation of the written word. These are called "new" habits because they differ from those developed in learning to read one's mother tongue. A new set of sound-letter correspondences in the foreign language has had to be taught to enable the student to recognize familiar words in print and to read them aloud correctly. Later the students should be able to read aloud unfamiliar words with the help of sound-letter correspondences that have been firmly established. Even in this second stage, the connection between the sound of the language and its written form has an important role to play in developing good reading skills.

In addition there must be a carefully planned program using materials that limit the number of new items per page, so that the pupils may read for direct comprehension with little, or preferably, no use of English to explain meaning. This second stage is then a continuation of guided reading, but it is the beginning of the development of the real reading skill-- to get meaning from the text, rather than bringing meaning to the text which was the very first step. The reading material no longer consists of an exact replica in print of dialogues or other audio-lingual material. It should be a recombination of mostly familiar material that provides reading both informative and interesting to the pupils. As the student's reading skill develops the ratio of new items may be increased, but this must be done with caution and careful provision for explanation of new vocabulary by oral use, illustration, simple definitions, antonyms and synonyms.

I. MAINTAINING A TIME LAG IN THE PROGRESSION OF SKILLS

An important consideration in teaching the reading of a foreign language is the maintenance of a lag between oral presentation and the written forms. Given a text that is properly graded and based on the audio-lingual phase of the course, the student's ability to read for comprehension without translation will rely to a great extent on his mastery of structures and correct use of vocabulary already learned orally in the class. This implies two kinds of careful planning by the teacher. First of all, enough class time must be made available for the continued development of audio-lingual skills. Secondly, the reading text and audio-lingual practice should be closely related in content. Provision must be made for the oral presentation and practice of new structures and of most new vocabulary appearing in the reading material, and this oral presentation and practice should precede the written

presentation. In preparing reading material, or when adapting a text already in print, the teacher has to keep the correlation of audio-lingual and printed matter in mind. By careful planning and control of reading material, the teacher can make it possible for the students to read for direct comprehension and to infer meaning of a new item presented in a familiar context. This ability to infer meaning is an important aspect of the reading skill and should be encouraged, but effective inference has to be planned and taught.

Progression in the first phase of reading, aside from the orderly presentation of sound-symbol representations, is presumably from the reading of material, in identical patterns and sequence, which has been mastered in the pre-reading phase toward the reading of the same overlearned structures and lexical items in recombination and in new context. In the second phase of reading, however, the time-lag between oral presentation and reading can be shortened, but it should not be eliminated during the elementary years of the foreign language sequence. That is to say, students in the elementary school should not be assigned the reading of material which has not been subjected to intensive oral treatment, or which carries them abruptly beyond the range of their oral mastery of the language. A way of maintaining this connection with spoken language once the first phase of reading has been passed is outlined here:

a) The class listens to a short selection, possibly no more than a long paragraph, without seeing the printed page. Preferably, this selection should be recorded on tape and, if possible, in a voice other than that of the teacher. Best of all, selections may be found which are recorded in French voices.

b) Auditory comprehension of the passage is checked by means of

questions and answers, and the selection is played again.

c) Auditory comprehension is checked again, and assistance is given with difficult points. New meanings are made clear by pantomine, by definitions in the target language, by synonyms or antonyms, or by repetition of the item in more familiar patterns or context. At this point the chalkboard comes into use, and the clues provided are left in view.

d) The selection is replayed, using the pause button after whole expressions to allow for choral and individual repetitions by the students.

e) Replay once more, using pauses to allow students to attempt to anticipate the phrase to follow. Though by this technique the teacher is testing for recall, actual memorization is not the objective and much assistance in recall can be given, preferably by other students and lastly by the teacher.

f) Play once again without pauses and ask questions which will elicit whole expressions as responses.

g) Play twice again while students first follow the text silently and then with choral repetitions as they read.

h) Allow time for silent reading without the tape and answer relevant questions about the passage.

i) Ask several students to read the whole passage aloud individually, occasionally replaying the tape while the students read silently in order to reestablish correct intonation.

If the procedure described here seems excessively detailed, one must remember that true reading in a foreign language (rather than decoding with a dictionary or than silent translation into the mother tongue) depends upon "automatic and direct understanding of the structural pat-

terns of the language from seeing their written representations."[1] Lado's definition of the reading skill also emphasizes habit.[2] More than at any other level at which modern languages are tanght, time exists in the elementary school for the formation of a reading habit, which can be built upon and extended in later years to provide true reading power.

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1. George Scherer. " A System for Teaching Modern Foreign Language Reading", Teacher's Notebook in Modern Foreign Language. New York. Harcourt, Brace and World.

2. "Reading is grasping the language patterns from their written representation quickly without analysis of what symbols represent what sounds."

   Robert Lado. Language Teaching: A Scientific Approach New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1964. p. 137.

II. READING MATERIALS

The choice of reading material for FLES classes still presents a big problem to the teacher. It would be ideal to have all reading materials created to follow logically and suitably what was presented in the purely audio-lingual and introductory reading stages. At the beginning of the second stage in learning to read it would be advisable to present in print further recombinations of dialogues in narrative form with the occasional introductions of new material. But the student is apt to soon tire of this. Besides, having to write interesting narratives will soon tax the ingenuity of the teachers. Until there are integrated materials providing a complete sequence whidh includes the reading phase *, some of the readers now in print may be used effectively, provided that careful selection is made and time is allowed during the audio-lingual stages of learning to prepare the students for what they will read later. When making a choice of reader, the FLES teacher must study the structures and lexical items in the test and compare them with the content of the audio-lingual or pre-reading phase. It is necessary to avoid a text that has several new items per page. Two or three should be the limit, especially in the first reader. The meaning of many of the unfamiliar words should be able to be inferred or made easily understandable through pictures appearing in the text. Later on, as the students mature and improve their ability to get the general idea of a narrative or story by reading, new words may be explained by synonyms, antonyms and simple definitions. Having phonetic symbols of any sort, or for English translation to appear seems contrary to

* See list of materials at end of report.

to the natural reading experience. If the student does not have a knowledge of the basic phonology and morphology contained in the material, he should not be reading it. Furthermore, use of anything but the target language is only a distraction and serves to break down newly formed habits.

Another criteria for the choice of material is its suitability for the age and interests of the class. At first the privilege of seeing the the foreign language in print will be enough to motivate and interest the student. By the second stage the student will want to read something that is brief in content and enjoyable. Amusing short stories and anecdotes are appropriate for students in the fifth or sixth grades and usually appeal to them. They also want material that gives information about the people and country whose language they are learning. Material of this sort is still sadly lacking in readers suited linguistically to FLES classes. Some of the most delightful and interesting little readers seem to be those not at all set up for classroom use, since control of new vocabulary and structure is unsatisfactory and there are no aids in the form of exercises, question, etc., prepared for the teacher. These readers (see list at end of section) can be used for supplementary and/or out-of-class reading at the discretion of the teacher.

To summarize-- in establishing a criteria in the selection of good reading material at the FLES level, the following are considerations:

1. Does the subject matter suit the interests and level of sophistication of the students?
2. Is it a short story or selection with the majority of the structures contained having been previously learned?

3. Is the material completely in the foreign language, without English beside it, under it, or over it?
4. Is the material presented without the aid of some type of contrived phonetic guide aimed at achieving correct pronunciation?
5. Is the vocabulary at the end of the material explained in French?

III. READING FOR MEANING

During the first reading stage most students will have done relatively little reading. Reading activities will have been limited mainly to reading of dialogues previously practiced extensively in oral-aural drills and some recombination dialogues and narratives. In the second stage in the long sequence the student must learn to read swiftly and extensively, simple stories, essays, and other writings.

In the beginning when the reading aim begins to receive a large share of the learner's time, he will be handicapped by his lack of vocabulary, his inability to use context clues unconsciously, and a monocultural background which may make it difficult for him to understand material written by foreign authors or about the foreign country.

Because of these difficulties there will be a temptation to settle for translation of material read in order to check comprehension. Such a temptation should be resisted as should any tendency to assign vocabulary lists for learning. Activities which are teacher rewarded should be those which involve using the FL reading text for a purpose such as discussion in the foreign language.

Teacher guidance will be necessary to help the student make conscious use of grammar clues, background knowledge of a subject, and

knowledge of likely natural behavior (human and otherwise) in guessing at meanings of unknown constituents in a sentence or paragraph.

At this stage students will continue to read much material which is presented first for audio-lingual practice. They will also receive practice in reading dialogue material in new forms, for example, recombined into new dialogues or narratives. Some material will be first presented by the teacher or a tape recording for listening drill and then for mimicry-reading practice by the class.

Enlarging Vocabulary

In enlarging a reading vocabulary, any new vocabulary should be explained in the target language if at all practical. For example, it would seem more in line with maintaining the atmosphere of the language being taught to explain briefly, with a visual, a cultural item such as is contained in this sentence: "Le père Noel les avait mis dans mes souliers',by saying "ce sont les souliers que les Français mettent devant la cheminee à Noel, pas les chaussettes comme aux Etats-Unis", rather than a lengthy explanation in English. Some words, expressions or ideas con be expressed simply in the native language, and it would be more expedient to do so. It is chiefly a matter of self-discipline and knowledge on the part of the individual teacher.

Ideally the classroom reader should gradually include all the speaking vocabulary and provide some additions as well. If the proportion of familiar and new material is satisfactory, the students can read for meaning, learn some new vocabulary and combine audio-lingual practice with reading effectively. This type of multiple development of skills keeps the students alert and interested as they recognize their ability not only to understand the written word,

but also to use and discuss what they have read. A variety of exercises and drills will check on their comprehension of the material read and will increase their active vocabulary as well. To check on comprehension and retention of the content read (including any new vocabulary), the teacher can ask questions, the answers for which can be read aloud directly from the book, or she might ask for an oral resumé of a short page or a few paragraphs. To check on recognition and understanding of vocabulary, students should be directed to provide the missing word in a sentence taken from the text and copied on the board, or the teacher can provide the word orally and have the student put it in the correct sentence of several sentences taken from the text and written on the board. As the students begin to learn synonyms, antonyms and simple definitions they can match two columns of words according to these categories. These are but a few of the ways to combine the skills and provide a variety of classroom activity centered around the material read.

Silent Reading

By the end of the first reading stage the students will have learned most of the basic sound-letter correspondences, especially for vowel and consonant sounds that differ from those in English. These correspondences must be studied continually, reinforced and expanded to include all of the essential sound-letter correspondences in the foreign language. By the continued development of this skill during the second stage of reading the student can read aloud all familiar material accurately. This makes it possible to include in his reading vocabulary all his oral vocabulary, because he can verbalize independently as he reads, discovering familiar words that may not have been read aloud previously. So far both student and

teacher have been concerned with the recognition of the written language mainly by hearing the utterance first, seeing it in print and then reading it aloud. As new material was presented it was usually learned orally first, so the same procedure was followed. When the students' reading vocabulary catches up with his reading vocabulary, it is inevitable that other means of explaining new lexical items must be found in order to increase reading vocabulary as fast as the student's ability will allow. This can be done, as was mentioned previously, by the use of synonyms, antonyms and simple definitions using familiar vocabulary. By this time the student should have the opportunity to transfer to silent reading in order to develop his reading skill as his ability and interests indicate. Most students will already have attempted this on their own before the teacher plans to help them acquire this skill. When they receive a reader, children almost always look eagerly ahead to see what happens or to see how much they can understand. If the reader is simple enough, some children will be able to re to read silently ahead quite soon after the initial introduction to reading. But most children will need help. For that reason, the teacher should plan to have some silent reading done in classtime under her guidance.

As for the initial stage of reading when meaning was brought to the text by the relationship between the sound and the written symbols, silent reading at first requires and easily acquired relationship between the written symbols and their meaning without sounding out most of the utterances. The first printed material presented to a class for silent reading should, therefore, be made up of material already read aloud. To challenge and interest the students it should not be exactly the same text as the one read aloud. It should be a recombination of

some sort. One of the simplest forms is the question based on familiar material that has been read aloud. First the necessary interrogative words and verb forms should have been learned orally, then read aloud. The teacher can then prepare a series of questions based on a familiar text. She writes the questions on the board or has them duplicated on paper. The questions are read silently only. The students indicate their understanding of the question by answering orally, taking the answer from the familiar text.

Another procedure that may be used is to recombine a familiar story or narrative in resumé form. The students read this silently, then listen to oral questions based on the resume. Each student underlines on his copy of the résumé the sentence or sentences that answer the oral question. With time the students should be able to read silently recombinations of familiar material, including some new material. Exercises of this kind should be planned by the teacher for class work. Check on the comprehension can be carried out by the same proceduees used for reading aloud- by answers to questions, fill-ins using key words and expressions, and resumés-- all in the foreign language, of course.

Supplementary Reading

The above material represents what is often called a basal reading program because students work at it together. Even at this stage there will be some students who can profitably begin reading simple graded materials outside the basal program. To encourage their interest in reading and to provide for individual differences, it is advisable to have a small library of supplememtary books that can be used in school or taken home. Students should take only those books recommended by the teacher and should be instructed to make use of the foreign language picture dictionaries to look up new words. By the time the students are capable of supplementing their reading outside of class, tney should have been introduced to the use of simple picture dictionaries entirely in the foreign language such as Mon Larousee

En Images, Librarie Larousse, Paris and Premier Dictionnaire En Images by Fourre, Didier, Paris. Some of the simple Golden Books (Petits Livres d'Or) will be of interest to those beginning to read because the pictures help to clarify meaning. For students in the second stage of reading there are other books more appealing to their age (See again the list at the end of this section for suggestions.) Such extensive reading represents one excellent way to provide for individual differences in the FL classroom.

Analysis of Structure

By the time the students are beginning to attain some degree of skill in reading, the need for some analysis of structure is inevitable. The students will indicate their need by questions concerning the reason for the spelling of words that they see-- such as articles, singular and plural forms, verb endings, etc. In order to avoid a disorganized and confused presentation of the fundamental principles of the structure of the language, it is advisable for the teacher to plan this presentation rather than leaving it entirely up to the students to find out by asking questions. By clever planning the teacher should encourage the students to discover the structures which they have practiced orally and are now reading. But she will have a plan, and will follow up their observations in a systematic manner providing drill and reinforcement of each structure as it is discovered and discussed. At all times this presentation of structure and the principles behind it must be functional and kept to its simplest form in terms of only what is needed to understand the text being read. This is not yet the time for the pursuit of a structural study of the foreign language in any but its simplest, practical phase.

IV. WRITING

Although reading and writing (i.e., copying) may have been introduced simultaneously in the first stage, the fact that writing has received less practice than any of the other skills will mean that it has lagged behind listening, speaking, and reading. Writing activities will increase considerably in the second stage but they will remain at a lower level than other activities and the time allotted to this skill will be considerably less than that devoted to the others. Writing assignments must not require students to express ideas they are not able to express orally.

Students in the second stage should in the beginning have the benefit of review writing practice just as they review other skills. Such review should involve copying at home material which has been reviewed in class. Short daily dictation practice should check on ability of students to write the text without reference to the textbook. Using recombination dialogues and narratives for dictation exercises will provide variety that will not overly tax the learner.

After the review period, students should begin to learn increasing amounts of new and more difficult material. Occasional copying assignments will continue to be necessary. However, many other kinds of writing activities will be necessary to provide variety and opportunity for increasing independence of expression. Some suggested writing activities are the following:

1. Continued occasional copying and dictation practice. (Use a tape for variety.)
2. Reorganization of jumbled sentences to form meaningful utterances, (House, after, Jane, school, our, went, to).

3. *Modifying a sentence to practice making changes in grammar and syntax (changing tense, singular to plural, inverting word order, etc.)*

The transition from this type of activity to one involving very limited creativity in a writing experience can be effected by utilizing substitution and transformation drills which have been learned orally.

PROGRAMMING READING

THE ROLE OF THE FLES TEACHER AND THE READING SPECIALIST

Both Lado, in speaking of the systematic presentation of the association of sounds and symbols, and Scherer, in speaking of the constuction of reading material for students who have not yet reached the "point of liberation" (which Scherer sets at approximately 5000 words)-- both these writers use the term programming. It is indeed unlikely that any systematic approach to the teaching of reading in the foreign language-- and especially to the preparation of FL reading material-- can be successfully undertaken without consideration of the principles involved in programmed instuction. Scherer quotes John B. Carroll's summary of these as: "(1) the desired 'terminal behavior' must be clearly specified; (2) the material must be organized and presented so that progress is made by a sequence of small steps, each one made easier by the mastery of the last one; and (3) the student must have the opportunity to test himself at every step in the program."

Scherer applies these principles to the foreign-language reading program. He designates the desired terminal behavior as "reading with direct association between word and concept, with eventual liberation from especially constructed and glossed material." He establishes a formula for sequential progression based on a maximum of one new word in every 35 running words of text whose other elements are known or obvious, these new words being evenly spaced, useful, and surrounded by contextual clues. He recommends a provision for self-testing through early and frequent reintroduction of the new lexical items, though reinforcement by means of questions and recombination

reading, through extension of the pattern drill technique.[3]

Lado refers again to programming in discussing vocabulary building. He defines no liberation point, except to state that to regard a reading vocabulary of 2000 words in a foreign language as adequate is entirely untenable. He suggests the use of "concentrated readings with a deliberate vocabulary overload" in a programmed approach, "with each frame introducing, testing, or reinforceing a vocabulary item or an extension of one. For example:

Columbus discovered America in 1492.

Columbus _____ America in 1492.

His ship was the Santa Maria.

The Santa Maria was his ____.

He sailed from Spain.

America was _____ by Columbus in 1492.

His ship _____ from Spain.

He sailed on the _____ Santa Maria.[4]

Both of the authors quoted were referring to students above the elementary level, but many of the principles and techniques presented by them are adaptable to the FLES situation. It is obvious that students in the elementary years of a foreign-language sequence will not reach the liberation point in reading power designated by Scherer. Similarly, it would be inadvisable to offer children this young concentrated readings with a vocabulary overload. Nevertheless, each of these writers has much to say that is of importance to the FLES teacher; in particular, their statements concerning the need for struc-

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3. George A. C. Scherer, op. cit.

4. Robert Lado. op. cit., p. 140

tured and carefully progressive reading materials sound a note of warning to the FLES teacher. Too often the basic language materials available for use in the elementary school do not include correlated materials designed to carry instruction forward into the reading phase. The teacher is then forced to create reading materials or to select them from other unrelated sources. In both cases, the result is usually random rather than a structured and carefully progressive approach to reading, and a failure situation is created for the child which can distort the language-learning process for which such a careful foundation has been laid.

The foreign-language teacher has one decided advantage over the first-grade teacher who must teach pupils to read their native language. Insufficient research has been done to determine the range of language mastery which children have acquired in the mother tongue before coming to school. The first-grade teacher (or in some cases, the kindergarten teacher) normally works to establish a common basis of "reading-readiness" mastery to be used as a point of departure in beginning reading instruction, but the wide variations among children's verbal backgrounds immediately become operative and greatly complicate the task. The foreign-language teacher is well aware of the extent of the students' oral-language background. Even though the FLES teacher must still be concerned with reading readiness and even though there will certainly be varying levels of oral-language ability evidenced among students, still the teacher's sure knowledge of the extent and limitations of the language experience prior to reading can and must be utilized to make reading instruction effective and must guide the teacher in the preparation or selection of materials.

In previous years the distance between the specialty known as

"the teaching of reading" and the specialty known as "foreign-language teaching" was greater than it is today. Though there have always been shared concerns between these two fields, the awareness of them in both areas was less general and less evident, especially when the teaching of reading was considered solely as a function of the elementary school, and the teaching of foreign languages a function of the secondary school. There is today a growing raalization that reading is taught at many levels, simultaneously there is a trend toward earlier teaching of foreign languages. The two specialties are now beginning to confront each other at the same school levels. An additional and very important factor is also operating strongly to tighten the bond of shared concerns between the two specialties; at this time the single, most prevailing trend in research and changing practice in the reading field is toward a linguistic orientation. The insights and understandings concerning the nature of the language and the way in which it is learned, together with a scientific description of language, which have permeated the teaching of foreign languages in the last decade are similarly affecting attitudes toward the teaching of the native language, and especially the teaching of reading. Particularly in the elementary school, the reading specialist and the foreign-language specialist will be able to profit from a close professional interchange, and the opportunity to do so should not be missed. They have always had much to learn from one another as to techniques directed toward vocabulary-building, reading for meaning and enjoyment, interpretation of literary selections, choral reading, or testing for reading comprehension, among others. They should today be in very close communication concerning the nature of the reading process and the way in which it relates to spoken language, the planning of an effective reading-readiness phase of instruction, the adaption of pattern-practice techniques to reading, the use of color cues and other visual cues, techniques for teaching

the "fit" of language, and the development of critical facility in the judging of linguistically sound reading materials.

The two specialists should in particular examine together, and with care, any programmed materials being developed for use in either specialty. It is in materials of this kind that the sort of careful progression which has been described here is most visible. The simple principles of programmed instruction quoted from Carroll provide a framework for thinking about the task of teaching reading, whether in the native language or in a foreign language. Taken as a teaching strategy rather than as a component allied to a teaching machine, programmed instruction has certain inherent advantages, according to David P. Ausubel.[5] *It furthers consolidation, insures through careful sequential arrangement that each item learned serves as a foundation for the next in the ordered sequence, and takes full advantage of the "explanatory and integrative power of sustantive content" based on clarity and organization. He warns that the small-frame format of teaching-machine material and of most programmed textbooks may tend to fragment ideas and cloud logical relationships, especially for less able students. It is, therefore, neither a device nor a format that is recommended for consideration, but a logical strategy for teaching which is especially applicable to the problem of developing reading skill in the foreign language.*

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5. *David P. Ausubel, "How Reversible Are the Cognitive and Motivational Effects of Cultural Deprivation: Implications for Teaching the Culturally Deprived Child." In Urban Education, Vol. 1, Summer, 1964 University of Buffalo Foundation.*

SELECTIVE READING LIST

* Integrated materials with an introduction to reading

1. The Holt Series in Spanish and French - Elementary School through Secondary (Holt, Rinehart and Winston)

2. The Chilton-Didier Series - Bonjour Line (Elementary Level) Voix et Images (Secondary Level) Chilton Company

3. Bonjour Series (Elementary Level including reading and writing) Allyn and Bacon

4. MLA Guides (French and Spanish) Elementary Level French (grades 3-5, 6th grade course with introduction to reading not yet available) Spanish (grades 3-6 including introduction to reading) Educational Publishing Co.

5. Parlons Francais (Level III introduces reading) Heath de Rochemont Corp., Boston, Mass.

Suggested List of Available Reading Books

1. Baume. Y.S. Mes Petits Livres Illustrés. (Series of six elementary including some grammar--about 20 pages in each reader) 75 cents a copy. Frederick Warne and Company, LTD., London and New York.

2. Didier Series. Lire et Savoir (grades 7-10.) 75 cents. (1) Pionnier des Grands Lacs. (2) La Maison d'Autrefois. (3) Médecin Sous Les Tropiques. (4) Images de Jean Mermoz. (5) Marie Claire. (6) Monsieur et Madame Curie. (7) Visage de Saint-Exupery, etc, Chilton Books, 56th and Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia 39, Penn.

3. Gessler, Elizabeth F. Mon Livre. $1.00 and En Avant. 50 cents. (Both booklets contain simple reading material, games, songs and verse.)

4. Harris, Julian and Helene, Mounod-Cassidy. Petites Conversations with a Teacher's Guide (for the introduction of reading).Teacher's edition $2.50. Pupil's edition $1.50. 33-1/3 rpm record $4.50. D.C. Heath (revised).

5. Hameau, Marie-Anne. Je lis, tu lis I and II. 1960. Hachette (Paris) $1.00 Grades 4-6 Picture Books, emphasizing nouns, some sentence structures.

6. Leblanc, Annette. Nous Sommes Amis (grade 5 or 6). Ginn and Co.

7. Patterson, Frances H. Mes Premières Leçons de Français. (Revised edition) 1960. Record available, Spring, 1961. Elementary Reader for 5th and 6th grade. D.C. Heath. $1.80. Teacher's Manual $1.00.

Suggested List of Available Reading Books (continued)

8. *Pei, Marjorie L. A la maison et à l'école-J'étudie le Français Livret I (Revised) 1964 (Grade 5 or 6 combined reader with writing exercises) $1.00. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Webster Devision.*

9. *Reeves, Eleanor C. Un Voyage En Bateau.* Ginn and Company. 1961 (Beginning reader for grades 5, 6).*

10. *Spink and Millis. Totor et Tristan, Deux Soldats de Bois. (For teacher's use or as juvenile beginning reader). $3.00 Ginn and Company. 1938*

11. *Vogt, Vivian T. Suzanne et Pierre. Books I and II with Cahiers d'exercises (Texts $1.50 each, Cahiers $1.00 each) grades 5-6.*

12. *Wellek, Suzanne and Nelly Bass. Rire et Apprendre. (Elementary reader completely in French. 5th or 6th) $2.00 Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 131 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N.Y. 1940.*

13. *Wellek, Suzanne. Paul et Marie à l'Ecole. (Combined reader and grammar entirely in French to follow Rire et Apprendre). $2.50. Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 131 East 23rd St., New York 10, N.Y. 1950.*

14. *Young, Gale. L'Arche de Noe. (Elementary reader all in French. Grades 5 or 6.) St. Martin's Press, Inc. $1.25.*

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SUMMARY

The length of the pre-reading phase of instruction in the elementary school must be determined on the basis of the foreign language experience of the student and his stage of development in acquiring the skills of reading in his own language. Two years of a daily program of fifteen to thirty minutes of audio-lingual instruction constitutes a good pre-reading program though there are advocates who favor other time allotments.

The content of the initial reading experiences should consist of those structures in the speaking vocabularies of the students. An analysis of sound-letter correspondences should proceed simultaneously with the acquisition of a sight vocabulary. To check auditory discrimination and to sharpen a student's awareness of distinct sounds, reading readiness activities are suggested. A sight vocabulary accumulated by introducing already memorized dialogues, poems, etc., may serve as a basis for phonetic analysis.

Writing as copying should be introduced with the beginning reading exercises in order to reinforce phonetic analysis and strengthen the sight vocabulary. Spelling and directed writing are very limited in the first reading stage. The reading skills acquired in the first stage are extended, polished, and applied in the second. The majority of structures and vocabulary presented in printed form should be familiar to the student. The greater portion of time in the FLES program is still directed toward enlargement of the audio-lingual skills.

Reading materials should be chosen which suit the age and experience of the student and which present structures and vocabulary in a sequence of progressive difficulty. New vocabulary must be introduced in a familiar frame of reference without recourse to translation.

In the second stage, real reading-- the abstraction of meaning from

the printed symbol , can be implemented by teacher directed silent reading . Supplementary reading of texts with controlled content can stregthen the reading skills and provide for individual differences. Analysis of structure, very limited at this stage, should be the natural outgrowth of the students' observations and questions regarding the printed form of the language.

The FLES specialist and the reading specialist share a concern in providing sound sequential programs in the development of the reading skills. They can and should work together in preparing techniques and materials and in investigating the possibilities of programmed instruction.

Though this report has dealt primarily with reading, it has presupposed that these skills were being presented to students with a sound audio-lingual background. It must always be remembered that none of the skills in the long sequence are taught as isolated units. It is merely the emphasis which changes. The oral techniques of this material have already been utilized. The objectives now are that the student be able to recognize written material (always relating it to the oral learning) and vary it to the extent that reading and writing now become useable skills.

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